

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EZS  
[REDACTED]

Support person present: No.

1. My name is EZS [REDACTED]. I was EZS [REDACTED] when I was born, which was my mother's surname. I was also known as EZS [REDACTED] and EZS [REDACTED] when I was in care. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1952. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. According to my birth certificate, I was born in Lennoxton, Stirlingshire. My mother's name was [REDACTED]. When I was forty, I found out that my father's name was [REDACTED]. He never knew about me. He was a sailor and he went back to wherever he was from. I don't remember life at home before going into care. In later years, I got to know my sister who was a lot older than me. She told me bits and pieces. She told me that I was taken into care because my mum wasn't well. She wasn't fit to be a mother and she didn't bring any of her children up.
3. My older siblings were brought up by my maternal grandparents in Thornliebank, near Glasgow. I didn't know I had any siblings until I went back to stay with my mum at the age of eleven. My sister is called [REDACTED], but she's known as [REDACTED]. She had an older brother called [REDACTED]. They both had an Indian father. After [REDACTED] my mum had another son called [REDACTED] who was eight years older than me. My gran couldn't look after me. She'd had enough. She'd already brought up three of my mother's children. My siblings are all dead now.

4. When I read my social work reports, it seems that my mum didn't have adequate accommodation. There was nothing in my records to suggest that there was any violence in the home, but I think my mum was a bit promiscuous. According to the records, she stayed in the Govan area of Glasgow. She also had TB. I understand that, but she managed to have boyfriends. That didn't affect me when I was a child, but it has affected me as I've got older. I know that some people are born to people that aren't fit to be parents. I probably would have had a terrible life with my mother, but maybe not. At least I would have known my own family. I'm still a bit confused about that.

### **Castlemilk Children's Home, Glasgow**

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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12. Secondary Institutions - to be published later The family who fostered me came to visit. They were called the [REDACTED]. I was too young to know how it was all arranged. They took me out for the day and I had a lovely time. They bought me a tartan bag and it had a Scottie dog on it. They were a nice family. There was the mum, dad and their daughter, [REDACTED]. She was a bit older than me.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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### Leaving Castlemilk

16. I was in Castlemilk until I was five years old. After the [REDACTED] took me out for the day, I was told that I was going to be somebody's little girl and I had to call them mum and dad. I was taken to the [REDACTED] by the lady from the welfare who used to come in a green car. She had a green uniform and a chauffeur who wore a hat. She told me that my mum and dad were dead and that I was getting a new mum and dad. Other kids in the home used to talk about their parents and whether they were alive or dead so I knew what dead was.

### The [REDACTED] family, Dennistoun, Glasgow

17. I was fostered by the [REDACTED] when I was five years old. I called the parents mum and dad so I don't know what their first names were. They seemed to be a nice family. They had in-laws, who I called granny and grandpa. [REDACTED] wasn't adopted or fostered, she was their child. I think she was seven or eight.
18. They lived in a tenement flat in Dennistoun, but I don't know what the address was. There was a sitting room, a big kitchen and a bathroom. There were two bedrooms. The dad worked, but the mum seemed to be at home all the time. The dad had a motorbike and I can remember him coming in with his helmet.

## **Routine at the [REDACTED]**

### *First day*

19. I can remember going to their flat for the first time. I remember them showing me the bedroom that I was going to share with [REDACTED]. It had bunk beds.

### *School*

20. I started at a proper school when I was with the [REDACTED]. I think it was called Campden Street Primary School. I might have got that wrong because I went to so many different schools. The school was quite close to our house. [REDACTED] and I could walk there ourselves. The mum used to look out the window and guide us across the road. The traffic wasn't as bad in those days, but there were trams. I was quite happy at school. I enjoyed it and I liked it.

## **Leaving the [REDACTED]**

21. I can't remember seeing a social worker at the [REDACTED], but I was well looked after there and I was well fed. I got pocket money and sweets and I was taken out. I was part of the family and aunts and uncles came to visit. I have no complaints at all. I was happy there. It was a good experience until they got rid of me. Shortly before I was told that I was going on holiday, I came home from school one day. There was a baby in a cot in the room that I shared with [REDACTED]. I never saw Mrs [REDACTED] pregnant and I don't remember her being away in hospital so I don't think it was her baby.
22. I was told that I was going on holiday to the seaside and I never went back to the [REDACTED]. I didn't know why at the time, but when I obtained my records it stated that it was because I was naughty and moody. I was only six. Kids are naughty when they're six. I don't remember ever being unhappy at the [REDACTED].

**Clyde Cottage, Dunoon, Argyll and Bute**

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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38. [EZW-SPO] family came for the day and took me out. It must have been organised beforehand. There wasn't any staff asking all the children who wanted to go out for the day. I went out in Dunoon with [EZW-SPO] and their two sons, [ ] and [ ]. After that day out, I was called to Mrs [EZU]'s office. She told me that I was going to go and live with [EZW-SPO]. She asked me whether I would like that and I said yes.

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**EZW-SPO** family, **██████████** then Beith, Ayrshire

44. I went to live with **EZW-SPO** family when I was eight and a half. **EZW-SPO** were quite young. **EZW** was about 28 and **██████████** was about 29 when I first went there. They had two children, **██████████** and **██████████**. **██████████** is about a year younger than me and **██████████** is seven years younger than me. They lived in **██████████**, which was in Ayrshire. It might have changed now because they changed the regional lines. After a year, we moved to Beith, which was **██████████**.

45. It was lovely at **██████████**. **EZW-SPO** lived in a bungalow surrounded by fields. Mrs **EZW** operated a **██████████**. She knew if someone came in because the cars went over a flex that rang a bell in the house. There was a big garage, like a barn, at the back of the house. Mr **██████████** kept floats there. They transported animals to

and from farms. He had his own business and quite a few people working for him. The [EZW-SPO] were hard working and we were comfortable.

### **Routine at [EZW-SPO]**

#### *Schooling*

46. I went to the local school, which was about half a mile along the road. Mrs [EZW] sometimes drove us there. It was called [REDACTED] Primary School. It was a tiny school. I think there were mixed classes, with different age groups. I loved school.

#### *Leisure time*

47. I had my own room at [EZW-SPO]. They kept buying me dolls but I didn't like dolls. I think they realised pretty quickly that I wasn't going to be a girly girl. I was a tom boy and I liked football and marbles.

#### *Religious instruction*

48. [EZW-SPO] weren't religious. We went to Sunday school but we didn't go to church.

#### *Christmas and birthdays*

49. I have a photograph of me on my ninth birthday. It was the first birthday cake that I ever had. I look happy in the photo and I was happy. I think it was the first birthday I had celebrated. My foster mum gave me that photo a few years ago. She gave me quite a lot of photographs. That photo is the first photo that I have of me as a child, apart from one my sister gave me of me as a baby.

*Relationship with foster family*

50. [EZW-SPO] had fostered before, but not long term. I couldn't call [EZW-SPO] mum and dad because of what had happened at the [REDACTED]. I called them by their first names. They didn't ask me to call them mum and dad. I didn't explain to them why I couldn't do it. I adored Mr [REDACTED]. He worked hard so we only ever saw him at lunch time. We came home from school for lunch. We were usually in bed by the time Mr [REDACTED] came home from work, but weekends were spent going to places like Largs and Ayr.
51. I loved it at [EZW-SPO]. I loved [REDACTED]. I was a tom boy so I played football and marbles with him. [REDACTED] was about a year old. I didn't really take much to do with him because I wasn't into babies. Mrs [EZW] was English so her parents lived down South. We went to visit her parents, sister and brother-in-law now and again. Mr [REDACTED] parents lived in Kilbarchan so we went there on a Sunday.
52. [EZW-SPO] treated me the same as their own children. I was well cared for and loved. I had my own room and I got pocket money. I was naughty at [EZW-SPO], but just in the usual way. Sometimes I fell out with [REDACTED] [EZW-SPO] put up with it, just like they did with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I was never hit or anything. I just got reprimanded, as did the boys.

**Leaving** [EZW-SPO]

53. I should never have been taken away from [EZW-SPO]. I stayed with [EZW-SPO] until I was eleven. I was told out of the blue that I had a mother after being told I didn't have a mother and father. The social work never explained their decision to me. Mrs [EZW] took me on her knee. I was big by then because I was ten and a half. She said that she had something to tell me and that I was going to live with my mother. I told her that I thought my mother was dead. She said that she wasn't and that she hadn't been very well. She said that they'd been looking after me, but my mum wanted to take me back.

54. The man and woman in the green car came back. My foster mum told me that it was the lady from the welfare and she was going to take me to my mum's. I didn't want to go. I had friends at school and I was happy. I told my foster mum that I didn't want to go but she said that she couldn't do anything. I was then taken back to stay with my mum. I hadn't seen her in all those years. It was the first time I remember meeting her or knowing anything about her. I thought that my mum and dad were dead.
55. Apparently my mum had tried to get me back before. The authorities wouldn't allow it because she didn't have an adequate home. I don't think she had tried very hard. She never visited. I don't know why she wanted me back. You can't take a child back after eight years and not have seen them in that time.

### **Living with my mum, Gorbals, Glasgow**

56. My mum was living in a flat in [REDACTED], which was in the Gorbals. When I went to stay with my mum there was a man living with her. He was a Polish man called [REDACTED]. He was a nice enough man. I think he worked away all week. I found out later that it was [REDACTED] flat. My mum was also looking after my sister's baby, [REDACTED] who was six months old.
57. Living with my mum wasn't a very happy experience. My mum was horrible to me. I was missing my foster family. They had a nice big house and a garden. I know that sounds terrible, but I was there with a strange woman, a baby and a man in the middle of Glasgow. I had been taken from the country. It was scary. The streets were scary. I went to the local school across the road. I can't remember what it was called. I went to fourteen different schools so it's hard to remember them all.
58. I didn't realise my mum was ill. She didn't look ill and she wasn't in her bed or anything. She had TB so I don't know if she was still ill with that. She died from heart failure six months after I went to live with her. She took ill and she was taken away in an ambulance. She died a couple of days later.

59. I didn't know I had any siblings until I went back to stay with my mum. By the time my mum died, my sister had turned up. She had gone to work in London with her husband and my mother had been looking after her six month old baby. My sister took her baby and I went to live with my mother's sister, who I hardly knew. I went to live in a two-roomed flat in Parkhead with six other people.

**GAO-EZV Family, Parkhead, Glasgow then East Kilbride**

60. My aunt's name was GAO. I later learned that she wasn't married to my uncle, but she had taken his name. His name was EZV and he was from Irish stock. I think they were both in their forties. They had four children when I went on to stay with them. The oldest child was then there was who was about the same age as me, then there was and , who were younger than me. Later on, my aunt had another child, . I'm still in touch with them all. They're my blood family.
61. After a while, my aunt and uncle got a house in East Kilbride. It was a four-bedroomed house. I think they might have got the house in East Kilbride because they had me.

**Routine at GAO-EZV**

*Washing and bathing*

62. There was no toilet in the house in Parkhead. It was in the stair and we shared it with other families. I don't know what the welfare was doing, letting anybody go to stay in that.

*Clothing*

63. I can remember going to John Street social work office to get my clothes. My aunt would take me there. There were big, stone arches. I don't know Glasgow very well,

but it was in the centre of Glasgow. I wasn't allowed to get anything from shops. There were all these shelves full of clothes. You got two nighties, two this, two that. They were new clothes.

### *Schooling*

64. I don't know how, but I passed my eleven plus. I went to Eastbank Academy in Glasgow. When we moved to East Kilbride, my aunt and uncle sent me to the village school, which was a junior school. We'd moved to East Kilbride at Easter time and during the Easter holidays I'd made friends with people who went to the village school. Because of that, I was quite happy to go to the village school but my aunt and uncle should have made me go to high school. I came top at the junior school quite a lot.

### *Work/chores*

65. My aunt had to go out to work. [REDACTED] and I had to go away to Dennistoun to pick up [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from an aunt. We then had to go home with them. I was only eleven, twelve years old. We had to lay the fire and set the table for dinner until my aunt and uncle came in. There was a shop down at the bottom of the stair. I think we had tick there. I had to peel potatoes. My aunt worked in a butcher so she would bring in whatever we were having for the meal.

### *Visits/inspections*

66. I can remember a woman coming to [REDACTED] in Glasgow, where my aunt and uncle lived. She asked me if I wanted to live with my aunt and uncle. I couldn't turn round in front of them and say no. I had got to know my cousins and I did like them, but I didn't really want to live there. My uncle used to get drunk and throw us out. There were two rooms and all the kids were in one bed in Parkhead. I didn't see a social worker again while I was living with [REDACTED] GAO-EZV [REDACTED].



*Relationship with* GAO-EZV

67. I know that GAO-EZV got paid for having me. I know that because my aunty used to introduce me as her foster daughter. I remember saying to my aunt that I wasn't her foster daughter, I was her niece. It really annoyed me. She did it to make herself look good. They wouldn't have taken me on if they hadn't been getting money for me. My aunt hardly had any money because my uncle used to drink it.
68. My cousin, was a bit of a bully. She would be best friends with me one day and not the next. She was nasty and horrible. I don't know what was wrong with her. When she fell out with me, she used to say, "You're nothing but a bastard and you're kept by the state." I was really unhappy at GAO-EZV.

**Abuse at** GAO-EZV

69. My uncle used to get drunk and throw us out. When we moved to East Kilbride, that continued. He would pick an argument with my aunt and haul us out of our beds. He would shout, "You can all get out and take that black bastard with you." He was referring to me when he said that. The neighbours would call the police. They would take my uncle away, but my aunt would let him back in. When my aunt was expecting her fifth child, he got her behind the sitting room door and banged the door off her. He picked up a dining room chair and hit my cousin with it. Those type of things happened on quite a regular basis.
70. My uncle started to touch me in inappropriate places. Sometimes, I'd come home from school and my cousin had maybe gone to her friend's. My uncle was a painter and decorator so he didn't always have work. He'd be in the kitchen making toast or something. He'd come in and fondle me. By that time, I was thirteen. I didn't like being in the house on my own with him. He didn't go further than fondling at that time. He sexually abused me again later on, when I was seventeen.

71. My uncle died about ten years ago when he was in his seventies. I'm not sure how old he was when I first when to live with my aunt and uncle. He'd been married before and abandoned his two children. That was why my aunt and uncle couldn't get married, because they were Catholic and he'd been married before.

#### Reporting of abuse whilst at <sup>GAO-EZV</sup>

72. I told my uncle that I was going to tell my Aunt <sup>GAO</sup>. He said that nobody would believe me and I'd be back in a home. I didn't see a social worker until I ran away, so I couldn't tell them. I wasn't able to tell <sup>EZW-SPO</sup> after I had ran away. I was too embarrassed. I didn't know how to put it into words.

#### Leaving <sup>GAO-EZV</sup>

73. I wasn't allowed to go to the shops. I was thirteen and I wanted to be fashionable. My cousin was being bought clothes that were fashionable. I wanted a pair of blue jeans because that was the fashion then. My Aunt <sup>GAO</sup> said they couldn't afford it. My cousin <sup>GAO</sup>, who was working, gave me the money to buy a pair. <sup>GAO</sup>, who was horrible, told my Aunt <sup>GAO</sup> that <sup>GAO</sup> had given me the money. Aunt <sup>GAO</sup> came up to my bedroom, battered me and took the money off me. She said, "That girl's got to work all week for that." That was why I ran away.
74. I made some good friends at school. I was able to tell them a bit about what was happening at home. They told me to run away. I took two of them with me because they weren't getting on with their mums and dads. My foster parents had three of us at their door. We went into Glasgow and got a bus to Beith from there. I'd never done that before. My foster parents didn't know that I was coming. They kept us for the night, but they phoned my friends' mums and dads. Their parents came to collect them, but I was allowed to stay. I told <sup>EZW-SPO</sup> that I wasn't going back to East Kilbride.

75. By that time, I was thirteen years old and I was aware that I was a ward of the social work department. I can remember someone came to visit from the welfare department. They asked me if I wanted to stay with [EZW-SPO] and it was all agreed. The only time I ever saw someone from the social work department was when I did a runner. I don't think my aunt made any efforts to get me back. I didn't want anything to do with any of them.

[EZW-SPO], Beith, Ayrshire (second time)

76. I stayed with [EZW-SPO] until I was about to turn sixteen. They were great foster parents. I went to Beith Academy and I passed all my exams. When it came to leaving school, the headmaster asked a few of us to go into his office to talk about further education. My foster mum wouldn't allow me to continue my education. That was the only thing I felt wasn't right about [EZW-SPO]. I think it was more my foster mum than my dad. She had two sons, but her attitude was that women get married and have kids. I asked her about it years later, but by that time it was too late. I just had to do what I was told because I knew that they weren't my mum and dad. I knew I could be sent away again.
77. I had to leave school when I was fifteen. My best friends went onto college. Mrs [EZW] had a friend who was a supervisor in a [REDACTED] factory, which made bras. She arranged for me to get a job there. It was in Johnstone. I got a bus there every morning at 7:00 am and I hated it. I had to take my salary home to Mrs [EZW] unopened. I got £1 back, so ten shillings went into the bank and I got ten shillings to spend.
78. I think [EZW-SPO] fostered me up until I went to work. I do remember a woman from the welfare coming to talk to me after I'd left school. She asked me about the job. I told her that I didn't like it. I did it anyway. I had no choice but to do it anyway. I would have liked to have made something of my life, but the decisions were made for me. I don't blame my foster mum because that was the times back then.
79. I started work in July when I was fourteen. I didn't turn fifteen until the [REDACTED] I worked there for almost a year. I think I was annoyed because I wasn't allowed to stay on in

further education. Even though I was earning a wage, my foster mum didn't allow me to choose my own clothes. I was fifteen and I was earning a wage and my friends were going out to discos. I think my mum was frightened that I'd go off the rails and run off with boys. Maybe I wouldn't have if I'd been allowed to go to school for a bit longer.

80. I think I was all mixed up because I'd been back and forward. I wish I'd been left with [REDACTED] but my mum had the right to take me back and there was nothing anybody could do about it. Because I'd stayed with my aunt and uncle I'd seen a different side of life. I'd also seen more freedom. It was the city and I could go out and about more. When I was with my foster parents, I was more secure. It was a village so everybody knew everybody. I felt safe and it was a lovely area. I didn't feel it when I first went back to [REDACTED] but as I grew up I felt more restricted.

#### **Abuse at [REDACTED]**

81. I had an argument with my foster mum one day. We used to go to Sunday school and I became a Sunday school teacher. We were supposed to go to bible class in the afternoon, but I started going to the café with my friends instead. I would play the juke box and drink coke. I had the odd cigarette. That was the worst thing I ever did. My foster mum thought I was getting a wee bit out of hand. We had an argument one day. I wanted to wear a certain coat and she didn't think it was appropriate for the bible class. I wasn't going to bible class. When Mrs [REDACTED] didn't let me wear what I wanted to wear, I was cheeky back to her. I turned round and told her that she wasn't my mum and she couldn't tell me what to do. She slapped me. It was the first time she'd ever hit me. It was a sore one too. She told me later that she did regret it.

#### **Foster care with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Beith**

82. I went to the café and then I didn't go home. I went to my friend's aunt and uncle, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in Beith. I can't remember their surname. My friend's aunt said it was terrible that Mrs [REDACTED] had hit me. She said that I could stay with them. It was a

bad idea. That was where everything really went wrong for me. I was fifteen and a half. My foster dad came to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] house and tried to get me back. I said no and told him that my foster mum was horrible. I wish I'd gone back now.

83. A social worker came to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] house to inspect it. I remember showing them my room in their house. They were a couple in their late thirties or forties and they didn't have any children. They were really into the church. They had a nice home and good jobs. I was working, but I was still under the welfare department. I think my social workers came from Glasgow, but I don't know their names. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] fostered me. They allowed me a lot more freedom. I went to discos and I got a boyfriend.
84. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were good to me, but I was only with them for about six months. They told me one day that they were splitting up. They said that I would need to go to a hostel in Glasgow. It was a big shock because it meant that I'd need to leave all my friends again. My boyfriend and I decided to run away. I went to work and got my holiday pay and whatever I was due. I had to go to [REDACTED] to get my birth certificate. I went to their house and Mrs [REDACTED] told me that they were moving to Nottingham. She told me to keep in touch and she gave me their address. I should have told her what was happening, but I didn't.
85. My boyfriend's name was [REDACTED]. We ran away to Blackpool. I think it was about a week before my sixteenth birthday and my boyfriend was three or four days younger than me. We were going to get married at Gretna Green when we turned sixteen. I think the money lasted about a week. We were walking along the street one day. A police car drew up and collared us. We were taken to the police station. His mum and dad came up and collected him. I was put in a cell for the night. Someone from the welfare came and took me to Manchester Airport. We got a plane back to Glasgow and I was put in a remand home for a few days.

## Beechwood Remand Home, Tollcross, Glasgow

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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## Arnprior Hostel, Glasgow

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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## Working as a mother's help, Giffnock

88. After being in Arnprior Hostle, the welfare got me a job in Giffnock as a mother's help. I lived in with the [REDACTED] family, who were really nice. They had two girls. They were a lovely family. While I was there, I would go and meet up with my boyfriend in Glasgow. I was there for about six months. My aunt then got in touch with me through my cousin, [REDACTED] I went to visit them in East Kilbride. My aunt persuaded me to go and live with them. She wanted me to look after their youngest daughter, [REDACTED], while she went out to work. Stupidly, I did.

GAO-EZV [REDACTED]

## [REDACTED], East Kilbride (second time)

89. When I went back to East Kilbride, my boyfriend would come through with his uncle and pick me up. They would take me through to Kilbirnie in Ayrshire, where he lived.

I'd stay with [REDACTED] aunt and uncle for the weekend and go back to my aunt and uncle's in East Kilbride during the week. I think my aunt fostered me again. Someone did come from the welfare office. My aunt would introduce me as her foster daughter again.

90. My boyfriend's mum and dad took him back in after Blackpool, but he fell out with them because they went against me. He went to stay with his aunt and uncle. My uncle started to do his usual. He started touching me. I told my boyfriend and he persuaded me to go and with his aunt and uncle in Kilbirnie. His mum and dad said that I could go and stay with [REDACTED] aunt and uncle if he went home, which he did. His parents weren't keen on me because of my colour. We were so young and stupid. We had a plan. The plan was that I would get pregnant so we could get married and get a house. I was still under the care of the welfare when I went to stay with my boyfriend's aunt and uncle.

#### **Living in Kilbirnie and [REDACTED], Ayrshire**

91. When I fell pregnant, [REDACTED] dumped me because of his parents. It was a hard time. I was still staying with his aunt and uncle at that time, [REDACTED] EZX-SPO. They had three girls, aged five, a toddler and a baby. One day, when I was still living with the [REDACTED] GAO-EZV, the uncle came to pick me up and he was on his own. He stopped the car and he tried to kiss me. I told him where to go. When I did go and stay with [REDACTED] EZX-SPO the aunt took the kids to see her mum one evening. He came in and I think he had been drinking. I think it was a weekend. I was in my bedroom. I went to the loo. He pushed me into their bedroom and onto the bed. He tried to rape me. I managed to fight him off. I kicked and I kicked. I was bruised on my arms afterwards because he had tried to hold me down. I told him that I would tell his wife.
92. Things were difficult because I had nowhere to go and I didn't have anybody. The next day, [REDACTED] I just didn't want to be here. My boyfriend's aunt came in and found me. I was taken to hospital in Johnstone or Paisley. I was about three or four months pregnant at the time. [REDACTED]

93. In the meantime, <sup>EZW-SPO</sup> house in ██████ had been bought by their friends, who we called aunt and uncle. Their names were ██████ and ██████ and they had three sons who were aged about twelve, ten and five. They got wind of what had happened to me. They got in touch with me and asked me to go and live with them. They gave me a job in the restaurant they had built onto the house. I don't know whose idea it was, but they offered to adopt my child. I had a welfare officer called Mr Caldow at the time, but I don't know where he came from.
94. I was still only sixteen at this point. I tried to get in touch with ██████, but he didn't want to know. He told me to have an abortion. I must have been about four or five months pregnant by that time so I was too far on. The ██████ boys treated me like their big sister. When it came to having my daughter, they were trying to pass her off as their adopted daughter. They didn't want their sons to know that she was mine. I had agreed to it because what else could I do?
95. I had to go to a mother and baby home for about six weeks before my daughter was born. The ██████ didn't want the boys to connect my baby to me. She was called ██████ but she was named by Mrs ██████. After ██████ was born, I was taken back to the mother and baby home and I had to leave her at the hospital. I broke down. I couldn't cope with it. When I got back to the ██████, I had to watch my baby and pretend that she was my foster sister. I just couldn't do it.
96. When I told them I wouldn't agree to ██████ being adopted, the ██████ put me out on the street there and then. I had to apply to the welfare to get ██████ back. I went to stay with my friend in Beith until Mr Caldow came. It took about a week, but I got ██████ back. I never saw ██████ again. My friend told him that ██████ had been born. He said that he was going to come to her house to see the baby, but he didn't come. His parents didn't want a black face at their door. There was a lot of prejudice back then. My baby was born with red hair and blue eyes.



GAO-EZV [REDACTED] Family, East Kilbride (third time)

97. My friend then took me back to my Aunt <sup>GAO</sup>[REDACTED] and Uncle <sup>EZV</sup>[REDACTED] because I had nowhere else to go. It was back into the frying pan. It was a disaster. My aunt gave me a room so that I could get up and feed my baby in the middle of the night. A few times when I was up feeding the baby, my uncle would come in and turn the fire off. He just made my life a misery. He sexually assaulted me and said, "You know what it's all about now."
98. I got a job, but half of my wages went to pay for the nursery. I wanted to get out of the house during the day when everybody else was out of the house, just in case my uncle came back. I got a job at [REDACTED] making kilts and tartan things. It had a nursery attached to it. I wasn't there for very long. I got a tax rebate because I'd started working. My aunt asked me for a loan of money. I never saw it again. My aunt was always strapped for cash.

Reporting of abuse at <sup>GAO-EZV</sup>[REDACTED]

99. My uncle kept telling me that I'd end up out on the streets and nobody would believe me. He said that I'd cause trouble. He said that I'd cause the family to break up. When I was seventeen, I went to the social work office to tell them about the abuse. I told the social worker what my uncle had been doing and she did nothing. Her answer was just to get me a job and get me away. I also told my doctor when I was living with the <sup>GAO-EZV</sup>[REDACTED]. His answer was that I should have my daughter adopted. She was six months old by then.

Leaving care

100. I couldn't stand living with my aunt and uncle anymore so I went to the social work department in East Kilbride. They got me a live-in job, looking after three children in Coatbridge. Their mother and father had divorced and the father was looking after his

elderly mother. He stayed with his mum. There was something going on in the courts and the father didn't want the mother getting custody of the kids. I was in a flat looking after four kids, including [REDACTED] I did all the cooking and cleaning. I don't know how I did it but I did and I did it well. I was seventeen, but I was still under the care of the social work department. I worked for that man for about a year until his wife got custody of the kids. I went to the welfare office again and they got me another job in Edinburgh, working in a children's home. I think I remained under social work care until I was eighteen. I was then told that I was no longer under social work care. I think I was in Coatbridge when I turned eighteen.

### **Life after leaving care**

101. I worked in a children's home in the Colinton area of Edinburgh. It was a home for children and babies, so they were all pre-school age. It was a live-in job and I was able to bring [REDACTED] with me. I had wanted to stay on at school to become a children's nurse. The children's home trained nursery nurses so I was promised training. I would need to sit exams to get to college. I liked it there. [REDACTED] was well looked after and she had other children to play with. It was a lovely area and the home had nice gardens. I loved the kids. It was then given notice to shut down. The sister in the home arranged for me to go to the council and get a flat in the Muirhouse area. The home seemed to get a stay and I went back to work in the home, from my flat. Since then, I haven't been under the welfare.
102. I got married to an Edinburgh guy. I met him at the age of nineteen when I was still working at the children's home. I had two more daughters with my husband. The marriage was a disaster. My husband was a sailor and he had a drink problem. We were married for twelve years. I went on to have my son, [REDACTED] through another relationship. He died of leukaemia twelve years ago.
103. I was too busy to continue with further education. I worked in various jobs. I worked at the [REDACTED] factory and in shops. I also worked at [REDACTED] College as a housekeeper

for the headmaster and his wife. I managed to buy a flat in Stockbridge on my own. I had a lot of good times, especially with my children.

104. I stayed in touch with my foster family throughout my adult life. **EZW-SPO** are dead now, but I'm still in touch with my foster brothers. My foster dad died three weeks after my son and my foster mum died last year.

### **Reporting of abuse**

105. I wish I'd punched my uncle and told people what he did. I think I buried all the abuse because I had a child. I had to get on with my life and do something. I just kept it all in. I did tell my family about what my uncle had done years ago. I told my cousins and it's not their fault. I was told to keep quiet. About three years ago, I told all my cousins what their dad was like. They didn't talk to me for a while. It wasn't because they didn't believe me because they did. It was a shock to some of them. They're talking to me now. I don't know whether Uncle **EZV** sexually abused his own children. **██████████**, the oldest of his children, said that he didn't abuse her. His son hated him and didn't speak to him for years before he died. He doesn't speak to any of the family because of the father. **EZV** died about ten years ago.
106. I've never reported what **EZX** did. Other than tell a friend, I've never spoken about it until telling the Inquiry what happened.

### **Impact**

107. I've never really trusted people. I've had quite a low opinion of myself because of the way I was brought up and because of my colour. People would bring my colour up when I fell out with them. I didn't have any identity. I didn't really know who I was. I used to look at myself and wonder who I was.

108. I used to have nightmares about what happened to me as a child, but I don't have them anymore. I do have flashbacks. Sometimes it happened when my children were growing up. There were times when I got so anxious, I just couldn't cope. I've tried to take my own life on a few occasions. I've been on anti-depressants off and on throughout my life. The last time was when I lost my son at the age of 24. I'm off anti-depressants now.
109. I don't know why I didn't end up a drug addict or an alcoholic. I could have been, but my kids came first. I've had some difficulties in my relationships with my children. I didn't have the tools to be a good parent. I did give them affection when they were young, but all that was in my head was to give them a roof over their head, feed them, clothe them and love them. I didn't really know what I was doing. They know about some of the things that happened to me as a child. They know what my uncle did because I told them. I wouldn't let my children live with a man who came in drunk. They resented that later on and none of them have children.
110. I moved away to East Kilbride in 2003. I couldn't cope there. I had really bad depression. I'd tried to kill myself again and I ended up in hospital for four weeks. I came back to Edinburgh in 2005 and I went to the social work department. I told the social worker that I felt worthless. She tried to talk to me, but you don't get enough long term commitment from doctors and people like that. They don't really listen. They don't hear. The social worker tried to tell me that it wasn't my fault and that I was a child.
111. My self-esteem has improved with help from Future Pathways. I was referred to them by the Inquiry. Future Pathways arranged counselling for me. It was the first time I had spoken about everything that happened to me. I'd never had any help before that. The counselling I received through Future Pathways was brilliant. I met the counsellor once, but then it was over the phone because of Covid. I had tried to talk to my cousins but I'd been told not to say anything, so I just kept it all in. Now it's all come out and I feel a lot stronger.

**Records**

- 112. Edinburgh City Council obtained my social work records from Glasgow in 2005. They filled in a few gaps, but they didn't have a lot of detail. They were heavily redacted and the names were all blacked out. I couldn't make out half of it because it was written by hand. A lot of it hadn't been copied very well. There was nothing much in any detail.

**Lessons to be learned**

- 113. They need to tell children the truth. They shouldn't be told that their parents are dead and then be told something different. Children should be told the truth. Things should be discussed with them and they should be asked what they would like. They should be treated as young people, not told a load of nonsense. You can tell children the truth, but do it in a nice way. The people who foster should be looked into more. Just because you're five, six or seven doesn't mean that you're stupid and you don't remember things. Children grow up. That's what people need to remember. I hope children now and in the future are treated a lot better, with respect and dignity. They need to be listened to and asked what they want, the way a good parent would ask their child and listen to them.
- 114. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed.....  .....

Dated..... 3/12/21 .....